Durban Museum shows that the species ranges further south than indicated by Vaurie's account, to reach south-eastern Africa (Natal).

A sub-adult falcon shot at Tongaat, on the Natal North Coast, on 13th December, 1961, was received at the Durban Museum on the following day, when it was identified provisionally as a young Hobby *Falco subbuteo*, though it was noted that it was light grey on the upper parts and the ventral streaking was grey rather than black. At that time this was attributed to possible geographical variation in the young of various *F. subbuteo* populations. The bird was sexed as a ♂; the wing measures 276 and the tail 134 mm. A second falcon, very similar to the 1961 specimen, was received at the Museum on the 13th March, 1967, having been picked up near Durban with a serious (? gunshot) injury to one wing. The bird was a ♂, and the wing 276 and the tail 128.5 mm. Again, the light grey upper parts and grey ventral streaking were noted. On comparing these two birds against the characters given for the juvenal stages of *F. subbuteo* and other small *Falco* spp. in Swann (*Monograph Birds of Prey*, 2, 1936: 353), it was decided that they agreed more or less precisely with those of the juvenal of the Sooty Falcon, differing substantially from the described young of *F. subbuteo* and *F. eleonorae*, the only other two species of comparable proportions known to or likely to occur in south-eastern Africa. As no identified material of *F. concolor* was available in South African museums to confirm the determination, the 1967 specimen was submitted to the Bird Room, British Museum (Nat. Hist.), London, where its identification as a young example of the Sooty Falcon was kindly confirmed by Mrs. B. P. Hall and Mr. Derek Goodwin.

These two records of *F. concolor* from Natal add a new species to the South African list, and throw much additional light on the wintering range of this generally uncommon falcon. It is recorded as being present on Madagascar between November and April. That the south-eastern African littoral may also be a major hibernal area for the Sooty Falcon is lent further support by a visual record of a black falcon made by me in the Botanic Gardens, Durban, on 26th December, 1960. This bird was located perching on a bare branch of a gum tree (*Eucalyptus* sp.), and was being mobbed by Drongos *Dicrurus adsimilis* and other birds. It allowed a close approach, and viewed from below appeared to be wholly sooty black, the breast with a greyish wash, the cere, gape and feet bright lemon yellow. On taking to wing, the bird was seen to have the flight-silhouette of a Hobby. It was noted as not being attributable to any of the birds of prey then known to occur in South Africa, and its identity was left undecided. On the basis of the field characters and the existence of identified specimen material of *F. concolor* now available from the same general area, the 1960 sight record was almost certainly of a fully adult example of the Sooty Falcon.

I am grateful to Mrs. B. P. Hall and Mr. Derek Goodwin, of the Bird Room, British Museum, for their kind help in this inquiry.

Apus berliozi Ripley, its races and siblings

by R. K. Brooke

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There is in the United States National Museum a series of an *Apus* swift collected by A. D. Forbes-Watson on the south-east coast of Kenya in early December 1964 and late January 1966 which is similar in size and markings to *Apus pallidus berliozi* Ripley (1965) but is darker and averages somewhat larger. For reasons to be given below I consider that it is premature to relate any of the breeding swifts of north-east Africa to palaearctic species and that *berliozi* is a full species. I therefore name the Kenyan birds

Apus berliozi bensoni subsp. nov.

Type: United States National Museum no. 519515; adult female; Kilifi, Kenya; 100 ft. a.s.l.; 26th January, 1966; A. D. Forbes-Watson collector; collector's no. 2690.

Measurements of type: Wing (flattened) 179, culmen 9, tail (to longest, *i.e.* 5th or outermost rectrix) 80, depth of fork (distance between shortest and longest rectrix) 33 mm.

Description: Differs from *Apus berliozi* Ripley in being darker and browner throughout, in being somewhat larger (see Table) and with faint dark shafts to the white throat feathers. There are nine other birds besides the type in the U.S. National Museum which belong to this taxon collected at Gazi, Kilifi and the Sokoke forest all on the south-east coast of Kenya.

The name *bensoni* refers to Mr. C. W. Benson, O.B.E., whose labours on behalf of Ethiopian ornithology are second to none and from whose friendship and guidance I have benefitted so greatly.

The birds collected in late January are in fresh plumage whereas those from early December are in worn plumage which gives them an appearance even browner than when in fresh plumage, let alone than nominate *berliozi.* The type is in fresh plumage. The differences in size and colour show that they are not *b. berliozi* in winter quarters: it is not known whether *b. berliozi* migrates since all specimens were taken in April and May (Ripley and Bond 1966). Little is known of the biology of *bensoni:* Forbes-Watson's labels and a study of the specimens provide what little may be said. No birds were in breeding condition. Most stomachs contained black beetles but some also contained flying ants and/or termites. The moult of the primaries is a symmetrical descending one as is usual in swifts and three of the ten specimens show a tenth (outermost) primary moulting out of step with the rest, a proportion that corresponds closely to that which De Roo (1966) found in *A. apus apus* (L.).

A suitable English name for *A. berliozi* would be "Watson's Swift" since all specimens of both races and all field notes have been collected by A. D. Forbes-Watson.

The type, as well as most paratypes, of *A. b. berliozi* which I examined in the U.S. National Museum are grey with a pale frons but four are brownish and of these one is very brown with a dark frons (U.S.N.M. no. 518012 non-breeding male collected on 17th May, 1964). It is not *bensoni*, which is not as dark below or on the frons. One is tempted to call this a representative of an undescribed race of *barbatus* in view of its dark frons and to relate it to the "large black swifts with pale throats flying . . . in March. None were collected but they were thought to be *Apus apus*" (Forbes-Watson in Ripley and Bond 1966); it differs neither in measurements nor in the shape of its feathers from typical *berliozi.* Such poverty of differentiation between two congeneric species on a small island seems so unlikely that I do not propose to describe another race of *barbatus* despite that species' propensity for colonising and differentiating on islands. The position can always be reviewed if further material warrants it.

It now remains to consider a group of swifts occurring in north-eastern Africa belonging to the genus *Apus* which may be called the barred swifts because they all have to a greater or lesser extent barred underparts due to the basal half of the feathers being pale to medium brown with a dark subterminal band thereafter and a pale to white terminal band of varying width. Lack (1956) elucidated this group and produced an arrangement which has not been seriously controverted and seems unlikely to be in the future. However he was unaware of *berliozi* and *bensoni* since they had not been collected and described when he was working. The largest species is nominate *aequatorialis* (von Müller) of which *reichenowi* Neumann and *schubotzi* Reichenow are synonyms, being based on aberrant individuals. The next in size (see Table) is *barbatus roehli* (Reichenow) of which *kittenbergeri* Madarasz and *lawsonae* (Vincent) are synonyms: *roehli* is smaller and darker than nominate *barbatus* (Sclater) of South Africa and Rhodesia but is so similar in pattern and in the relative proportions of the outer remiges and rectrices that it is the obvious thing to place them as subspecies. The smallest species is *niansae* (Reichenow) of which *shelleyi* (Salvadori), *nakuruensis* (van Someren) and *kapnodes* Friedmann are synonyms. This last form was described after Lack wrote. I have examined the type in Los Angeles: see also White (1967). *A. niansae* resembles *b. roehli* in pattern and the proportions of the outer remiges and rectrices, but is absolutely smaller and breeds contemporaneously on the same hills in Kenya. Nominate *niansae* therefore cannot be conspecific with *roehli*. In northern Somalia there is a swift of the same size, pattern and proportions as *niansae* called *somalicus* (Stephenson Clarke). It seems obvious to regard it as a subspecies of *niansae* since it differs only in being paler brown and with more white on the throat and is allopatric, living in a very arid area in which this type of variation is common. Lack (*op. cit.*), whose views I have summarized, hesitated over the relationship between *pallidus* (Shelley) in the Palaearctic and *barbatus* and *niansae* in the Ethiopian region since they all had similar patterns and proportions and no geographically intermediate forms were known. He inclined to the view that *niansae* was more closely related to *pallidus* apparently because *n. somalicus* is close in general colour to *pallidus* and because *niansae* is smaller than *pallidus*, it being very unusual to find tropical representatives of a species larger or even the same size as temperate ones.

The discovery and description of *berliozi* and *bensoni* complicates an already complex situation. Ripley (1965) placed *berliozi* as a race of *pallidus* on the grounds that in size, colour and proportions it fitted best with that species. The photograph in Ripley and Bond (1966) supports this and shows the large white throat and rather shallowly forked tail of *pallidus* and its races. The discovery of *bensoni* requires a restatement of the whole position since it is a race of *berliozi* on the grounds of similarity of pattern and proportion, the reasons why *barbatus* and *roehli*, *niansae* and *somalicus* are grouped as species. As far as is known *berliozi* and *barbatus* are allopatric: *berliozi bensoni* presumably breeds not far from where it has been found, *i.e.* in the coastal hills of Kenya whereas *barbatus roehli* breeds in hills at higher elevations in the interior of Kenya: the nearest locality from which I have seen material is Isiolo, 300 miles to the north-east. Although similar in size they are not particularly similar, bearing in mind that all barred swifts are alike: in *roehli* the colour is very dark and the pale terminal bands are narrow whereas the opposite holds in *berliozi* and in addition *berliozi* has a pale frons as in *pallidus* which is never present in *barbatus* and its races. The position is similar to that of *barbatus* subspp. and *bradfieldi* (Roberts) in South-West Africa which Lack (*op. cit.*) considered to be conspecific despite differences very similar to those between *barbatus* and *berliozi*. Traylor (1960) has argued against this view pointing out that despite the very close approach of the breeding ranges, no intermediates are known between two clearly dissimilar barred swifts and that the most useful approach is to regard *bradfieldi* as a full species. Traylor (*op. cit.*) only considered the relationship between *barbatus roehli* and *bradfieldi* but the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria, has two specimens of nominate *barbatus* (wing lengths 182 and 185 mm.) taken on 7th September, 1941, at Walvis Bay within the range of *bradfieldi*. Nominate *barbatus* starts breeding in September (Roberts 1939) and it was apparently this form that MacLean (1960) saw in the valley of the Fish River in southern South-West Africa in the breeding season. *Bradfieldi* has a rump paler than the mantle, a character not found in any race of *barbatus*. All this strengthens the view that *bradfieldi* is not conspecific with the *barbatus* group even if they form a superspecies.

The facts do not exist to determine whether *barbatus*, *berliozi*, *bradfieldi* or *niansae* is the most closely related to *pallidus*. Such facts could be provided by anatomical study, by biochemical study or by comparison of recordings of their calls, preferably by all three ways. The last appears to contain the species' own method of identification. In the absence of such data and appreciating the difficulties in obtaining such data on tropical swifts in the near future I consider that the only treatment which reflects the known facts and does not presuppose that we know what we do not know is to treat all five groups as full species.

Vernacular names for swifts are something of a problem since most species have few characters which lend themselves to providing suitable and distinctive names. In these circumstances traditional names carry even greater weight than usual. For the purposes of Ethiopian ornithology the barred swifts can be referred to as *Apus apus* European Swift, *pallidus* Pallid Swift, *aequatorialis* Mottled Swift, *barbatus* African Black Swift (to distinguish it from the American Black Swift *Cypseloides niger* [Gmelin]), *berliozi* Watson's Swift (as already explained), *bradfieldi* Bradfield's Swift, *niansae* Brown Swift. This last is an innovation. Jackson and Sclater (1938) called it the Abyssinian Swift: this has some merit since it is largely restricted to that and adjoining countries, but the species also occurs in Uganda and Congo (Brazzaville). Mackworth-Praed and Grant (1952) called it the Nyanza Swift being a more correct spelling of the place name from which the scientific name was formed. It has a barbarous sound and has the standard deficiency of all place names for species in that it is unduly restrictive in meaning and suggestion. *A. niansae* is paler than the African Black Swift and darker than the Pallid Swift (though this is hardly true of the pale *A. n. somalicus* in Somalia which at any rate is a brown form not greyish as in Watson's Swift) and therefore may properly be called the Brown Swift.

Table

Comparative measurements of barred swifts in millimetres and grams.

Notes

1. All linear measurements, except where otherwise noted, were taken by myself in the manner indicated in describing the type of *A. b. bensoni.*
2. No averages are given where less than five figures are available.
3. Weights of *A. a. pekinensis* from Cheng (1963) and the rest from the labels of material examined.
4. The chord of the tomium taken with dividers is considered a more significant measure than is the culmen.

	Wing length	*Tail length*	*4th–5th rectrix*	*Depth of tail fork*	*Chord of tomium*	*Weight*
A. b. berliozi						
♂	164–173	65–76	4.5–8	25–32.5	17.5–20	34–42
	av (18) 168.2	av (18) 69.1	av (18) 5.9	av (17) 27.6	av (19) 18.7	av (18) 37.6
♀	156–170	63–69	4–6	23.5–30	18–19.5	37–46
	av (11) 165.0	av (11) 66.2	av (11) 4.9	av (11) 25.3	av (11) 18.6	av (11) 40.1

	Wing length	*Tail length*	*4th–5th rectrix*	*Depth of tail fork*	*Chord of tomium*	*Weight*
A. b. bensoni						
♂	168–177	68–77	6–11	26–32	18–19.5	38.5–46
		av (6) 73.2	av (6) 7.8		av (5) 19.0	av (7) 42.4
♀	170–179	76–80	6–9.5	28–35	18.5–20	41.1–51
A .n. somalicus						
♂	144–160	59–64	3–5	18–24	16–17	
	av (5) 150.8					
♀	147–156	62–64	3–4	20–23	16–17	
A. n. niansae						
♂	148–165	59–65	1.5–6.5	19–25	15–19	24–39
	av (44) 154.3	av (13) 61.2	av (38) 3.3	av (22) 22.0	av (35) 18.5	av (20) 32.0
♀	140–161	53–64.5	1.5–5	17–23	15–19	25–37.5
	av (33) 153.2	av (12) 60.6	av (27) 3.0	av (10) 20.6	av (30) 16.7	av (17) 33.0
A. b. roehli						
♂	167–175	67–71	2–4	21–27	17–20	42–46
	av (9) 170.6	av (6) 69.3	av (7) 3.4	av (6) 23.2	av (8) 18.6	av (8) 42.0
♀	166–176	68–71	2–5	22–27	16–20.5	39–50
	av (15) 172.1		av (8) 3.5	av (6) 24.0	av (14) 18.1	av (10) 43.5
A. b. barbatus						
♂	180–184	74	4–5	26	18.5–21	
♀	180		6		19	
A. b. hollidayi (from Benson and Irwin 1960)						
♂	176–179	76				
♀	174–179					
A. bradfieldi						
♂	171–182		1.5–5		17–20	53
	av (7) 177.4		av (6) 3.7			
♀	169–182	62	2–4	17	18–19	44
	av (8) 175.6		av (6) 4.0		av (5) 18.6	
A. a. aequatorialis						
♂	192–213	75–93	4–9	28–30	22–26	84–104
	av (32) 203.7	av (7) 83.3	av (28) 6.5	av (5) 29.0	av (30) 23.7	av (15) 91.6
♀	192–210	80–90	3–8	27–29	21.5–24.5	83–102
	av (20) 203.3	av (5) 87.2	av (18) 5.7	av (5) 28.0	av (19) 23.1	av (11) 94.5
A. p. pallidus						
♂	160–175	62–74	4.5–5.5	22–28	17–19	
	av (6) 166.2	av (6) 68.0	av (6) 4.9	av (6) 25.4	av (6) 17.8	
♀	161–168	64–74	3–5.5	22–28	16–19	
	av (6) 163.0	av (6) 68.0	av (6) 4.4	av (6) 23.8	av (6) 18.1	
A. p. illyricus						
♂	166–179	63–73	4.5–5	26–29	17–19	
♀	165–169	67–74	4	21–28	18–19	
A. p. brehmorum						
♂	167–174	71–76	4–5.5	24–29	16–19	
	av (6) 170.7	av (6) 73.2	av (6) 5.1	av (6) 26.5	av (6) 17.9	
♀	163–171	66–73	3.5–5.5	22–29	16–19	
	av (6) 168.5	av (6) 68.2	av (6) 4.7	av (6) 25.3	av (6) 18.2	
A. a. apus						
♂	164–183	75–80	5–11.5	31–35	16–18	
	av (17) 169.5	av (6) 77.5	av (17) 7.8	av (6) 35.2	av (10) 17.0	av (c. 2000) 43
♀	164–177	69–82	5–11.5	24–34	16–19	
	av (12) 171.2	av (6) 74.5	av (9) 8.2	av (6) 30.3	av (8) 17.4	
A. a. pekinensis						
♂	164–178	72–79	7–10	27–33	16–18	37–41
	av (6) 168.3	av (6) 75.2	av (6) 8.3	av (6) 28.8	av (6) 17.3	
♀	164–174	72–77	7.5–9	28–31	16–18	
	av (6) 170.0	av (6) 74.2	av (7) 8.3	av (6) 29.5	av (7) 17.0	

In *A. apus* the 10th (outermost) primary is distinctly shorter than the 9th whereas in all the other species they are of approximately equal length. The distinctness of the barring is greatest in *aequatorialis;* in descending order thereafter it is *berliozi, pallidus, bradfieldi, niansae, barbatus, apus.*

SUMMARY

Barred swifts are those members of the genus *Apus* whose breast and abdominal feathers have the basal half pale to medium brown, a dark subterminal band and a pale to white terminal band of varying breadth. In the Ethiopian region two species, *apus* and *pallidus*, occur as non-breeding visitors and four species, *barbatus*, *berliozi*, *bradfieldi* and *niansae*, as breeding residents. Reasons for this arrangement are given, not least being the necessity to name *A. berliozi bensoni* subsp. nov. Biological data on this new race are given. Vernacular names are considered and "Watson's Swift" selected for *A. berliozi*.

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A new name for a race of the Black-headed Oriole

by Walter J. Lawson

In the *Durban Museum Novitates*, vol. vi, (16), p. 199, 1962, I described a new race of the Black-headed Oriole from the coastal lowlands of Moçambique as *Oriolus larvatus tibicen* Lawson, the type-locality being Panda, in the Inhambane district. Unfortunately I now find that this name is pre-occupied by *Oriolus Galbula tibicen* A. E. Brehm, *Verz. Samml.*, 1866, p. 4, nom. nud. lodged in the synonymy of *Oriolus oriolus oriolus* (Linnaeus), 1758, by Hartert, in *Vög. pal. Fauna*, vol. i, p. 51, 1903, from which it cannot be extracted and used again. I therefore propose

Oriolus larvatus additus nom. nov.,

for *O. l. tibicen* Lawson, 1962, not *O. G. tibicen* A. E. Brehm 1866 (Hartert, 1903).